
From: Jana Wickham-Allan [mailto:allan17@comcast.net]
Sent: Friday, July 29, 2005 4:26 PM
To: MLPAComments@resources.ca.gov
Subject: MLPAComments: Input from a local nearshore commercial skiff fisherman

Dear MLPA Managers,

I would like to submit a stakeholder comment that may be useful to your planning.

My name is David Allan. I am a local commercial skiff fisherman (Nearshore and Deeper Nearshore Permit holder, L08224, vessel #41989) who has fished as part of the Big Sur "mosquito fleet" that has launched out of Mill Creek and fished the sections of coast from Cape San Martin to Lopez Point (and beyond) historically for over the last 50 years (originating from the Harlan family of Lucia). Because of our traditional fishing methods using tiny skiffs launched through the surf to access the local kelp beds (much like the famous Newport Beach Dory fleet has done), I feel that you should be made aware of our existence, so that MLPA actions, such as establishing preserves doesn't wipe us out of existence due to political inconspicuousness.

We have contributed quite a lot of data to the fisheries management both at the DFG and NMFS levels. For example, I have worked with Dave VenTresca at DFG since 1990, providing species-by-species catch data. We have also worked closely with the Big Creek Reserve, providing data for a nearshore fishery study conducted by the Reserve manager, John Smiley over the last two decades. In addition, we have provided fish DNA samples to Dr. Russ Vetter of NMFS over the years. I am presently working with NMFS (Dave VenTresca) in establishing a Nearshore Fishery Log system.

Please be aware that our lives depend on our fishing enterprise, and we access our fishing via beach launch at Mill Creek. A preserve placed between Lopez Point and Cape San Martin would be cataclysmic to our livelihoods.

Also, I fish a home area off the south side of Pebble Beach between Pescadero Point and Cypress Point. This fishing area is of particular value to me because it is the only safe access to fishing in the winter when the surf conditions make Mill Creek too dangerous. I launch my skiff from Stillwater Cove or Monastery Beach to fish this area. Therefore, I want to make you aware that in the writing of the Marine Preserve laws, that "safe passage" be allowed by commercial fishermen transiting a preserve area with a load of caught fish to return to port of a launch/landing area. Last time the Preserve laws were proposed, they simply said that "no possession" of catch would be allowed. With the preserves extending out to 3 miles, it would severely impact fishermen in small boats (particularly we who use tiny skiffs), who are trying to return home from a legal fishing area, and confronted with crossing through a preserve to get home. I know that this was not the intent of the proposed law, to unfairly cut off access for small boat commercial fishermen, but the wording could cause a complication! Please take this into account when the laws are proposed and drafted. A "safe passage" for access clause is crucial.

Thank you for considering my input. If you could work with us who fish for a living, then we could support your fisheries management and MLPA concepts. I was referred to you by Astrid Scholz of ECOTRUST in the interviews they are conducting on local commercial fishermen, specifically for such purposes of including the fishermen's input into the MLPA process.

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